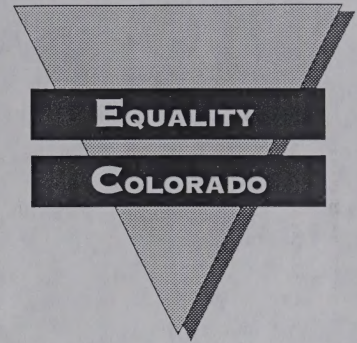


ACTIVIST NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF EQUALITY COLORADO

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MARCH 1997

ANTI-GAY 1198 PASSES KEY COMMITTEE

Despite compelling testimony from opponents, HB 1198 -- the bill which would deny recognition to same-sex marriages performed out of state -- passed Colorado's Senate Judiciary committee on March 4 on a 5-3 party-line vote. The bill will next go to the Senate floor, and would then pass on to Governor Romer. Romer vetoed this bill last year, but it is unclear what he'll do this year.

Several questions were left unanswered by the bill's sponsors, Rep. Marilyn Musgrave (R-Ft. Morgan) and Sen. Ken Arnold (R-Broomfield). Why do they see same-sex marriages from Hawaii as a threat? What will this bill do to transgender people already in same-sex marriages?

It's crucial that we create a groundswell of opposition to this bill. HB 1198 is an unnecessary attack on GLBT people, a divisive piece of legislation, and likely unconstitutional. Contact your elected officials, write letters to the editor, and stay tuned about any actions that may be taken against the bill.

ACTION!

- ▶ Write to State Senators at:
Colorado Senate, State Capitol,
Denver, CO 80203. Call
Senate Republicans at (303)
866-4866, fax (303) 866-2012;
and Democrats at (303) 866-
4865, fax (303) 866-4543.
- ▶ Gov. Romer can be written to
at 136 State Capitol, Denver,
CO 80203 and called at (303)
866-2471.

Three positive bills die; one still alive

Three legislative bills supported by Equality Lobby have already died in the 1997 session, but the Hate Crimes bill is still alive. **HB 1289**, which would have exempted needle exchange programs from drug paraphernalia laws died on the House floor. Sen. Pat Pascoe's Domestic Partnership bill, **SB 161**, died in the Senate Judiciary Committee on a 5-3 vote. And **HB 1266**, Rep. Gloria Leyba's Employment Non-Discrimination bill, failed to pass the House Business Affairs Committee on a party-line vote. On a more positive note, **SB 100**, the Hate Crimes bill, is waiting for a hearing in the Senate Appropriations Committee. If it passes there, we have a good chance to get it out of the Senate.

ACTION!

- ▶ The following Senators are in the Appropriations Committee:
Republicans Lacy, Bishop,
Blickensderfer, Mutzebaugh,
Wham, Schroeder; and
Democrats Johnson, Rizzuto,
Tanner, Thiebaut. Please call
them at the numbers above and
urge their support of SB 100.

Student Organizing Conference in Boulder

DIVERSIFY! That's the name of a leadership conference targeting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and supportive students in Colorado. It will be held Saturday, April 12 at the University of Colorado campus at Boulder. There is a nominal fee of \$5 to cover lunch. The day will include workshops, speakers, and entertainment.

Previous such conferences have been held at Ft. Lewis College in Durango and at Colorado State University in Ft. Collins. This is a great opportunity to learn new skills, network with other students working on similar issues, and become more involved in the larger LGBT movement.

ACTION!

- ▶ To register for this conference or to get more information, contact the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Alliance at CU Boulder: Campus Box 207, Boulder, CO 80309. Their phone number is (303) 492-8567 and their email address is pluslbg@colorado.edu.

Adviser Network

Thai Teacher Ban

Following the murder of a lesbian student by her gay roommate, Thailand's Education Minister has banned gay students from attending the Rajabhat Institute's teacher training program. He has recommended a "special education center" for them instead, claiming that homosexuals deserve "special treatment." They deserve this treatment because, according to Mr Sukhavich, they are "sick--both physically and mentally." He said this group of people cannot be left with no place to go, since that might end up "adding male prostitutes to society."

ACTION! Numerous articles on the ban may be found on the Bangkok Post's home page at www.bangkokpost.net, by searching their archive with the keyword "gay". You may send your own comments to postbag@bangkokpost.net More contact information is available from the Magnus Hirshfield Center for Human Rights at <http://pw1.netcom.com/~crosswix/thailand.html>.

News and updates

Chrysler: Due to the persistent efforts of the "Campaign For Equal Rights At Chrysler," Chrysler has added the words "sexual orientation" to the revised "Corporate Standards of Conduct" in January. Chrysler also claims that diversity training is currently being evaluated. These are certainly steps in the right direction. Activists urge people to keep the pressure on Chrysler to make sure they follow through with their commitments....

United: The San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously approved an unusual two-year lease that will allow United Airlines to build a \$90 million repair facility and flight kitchen at San Francisco International Airport. To be extended another 23 years -- which is United's desire -- the huge airline by then must show that it provides health benefits to registered partners of employees. The city ordinance is the first in the nation to require that companies doing business with the city offer health benefits to gay and straight partners of employees, if the partner is registered in a domestic partnership and if such benefits are available to married spouses....

Washington: Gov. Locke has vetoed a bill to ban same-sex marriages, calling it divisive and unnecessary and clearly designed to promote discrimination. "I oppose any measure that would divide, disrespect or diminish our humanity," Locke said. "Our overarching principle should be to promote civility, mutual respect and unity, and to reject hate, violence and bigotry. This legislation fails to meet this test."

CALENDAR

March 1997

Rally for Affirmative Action • March 10, 11:30 a.m.
Oppose legislative attempts to destroy affirmative action. Currently scheduled to be on the west steps of the State Capitol. Call (303) 866-0908 for more information.

Community Candidate Forum • March 18, 7:00 p.m.
Centennial Hall, Colorado Springs. Learn about the candidates for Springs City Council. Call (719) 635-6086.

April 1997

Second Mondays • April 14, Greeley
Weld County activists will meet to talk about organizing in the Greeley area. Call Equality at (303) 839-5540.

Queer Studies Conference • April 19, CU Boulder
Call (303) 492-1377 for details.

San Luis Valley organizing conference • April 26
Call Equality at (303) 839-5540 for more information.

Military Harassment Continues

According to Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, the armed forces discharged 850 people under the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell, Don't Pursue" policy in Fiscal Year 1996, the highest rate of discharge since 1987. SLDN documented 443 specific violations of the policy, where suspected gay service members were asked, pursued, and harassed. Women are disproportionately targeted -- they account for 21 percent of gay related discharges from the armed forces while only being 13 percent of the force.

Meanwhile, former Republican Senator William Cohen took office as Secretary of Defense on January 24 after being confirmed by the Senate by a vote of 99-0. As a U.S. Senator, Cohen (R-ME) had an 89% HRC voting record on issues of importance to the lesbian and gay community, and was one of 8 Republicans to vote for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act.

ACTION! Urge Defense Secretary William Cohen to support our troops by stopping the illegal anti-gay witch hunts and harassment that still plague our armed forces.

► Contact Secretary of Defense Cohen:
1000 Defense • The Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000
Call: (703) 695-5261

If you know of a service member under investigation, have them call SLDN for confidential legal information at (202) 328-3244. Visit their website at www.sldn.org.